

THOUSANDS SEE WOMEN JUMP TO DEATH.

ONE CRY OF FIRE! AND THEN QUICK SCENES OF HORROR.

Graphic Description of the Burning of the Windsor from the First Touch of Flame to the Cruel End.

How the Multitudes in the Streets and on the Roof Tops Viewed in Terror New York's Awful Conflagration.

There's nothing left of the Windsor Hotel to-day. An irregular line of wall encloses an area of smouldering debris. Under this awful pile are the bodies of men and women who were overwhelmed before they could reach the street.

In spite of a list, as carefully prepared as may be, nobody knows just how many are dead, how many were burned to ashes, how many are buried, half-charred, beneath hot stones and twisted iron.

The hotel was full of people, and there are unaccounted for rich guests and poor servants, employees and visitors, and firemen.

The conflagration was accompanied by every feature which makes a fire dreadful. Save darkness. When it began the hotel was the center of a huge holiday crowd. The St. Patrick's Day procession was passing on Fifth avenue, and people were packed on both sides of the way. These sightseers had also invaded the hotel, and every window that afforded a view of the great thoroughfare was full of heads.

It seemed as though grim death had loaded a big hall for a holocaust under the deceiving security of sunshine and bright skies.

Far up above the street, on the higher stories, chambermaids and housekeepers were stealing a moment from their work to see the followers of the green flag on their march.

With hardly more warning than a single shout of "Fire!" all these people in the hotel were called upon to struggle for their lives. In a time more brief than it takes to shift a scene on the stage of desire people were cut off from the stairways, the elevator shafts were columns of fire and human beings were leaping from the windows upon the heads of the crowd below to escape the more terrible fate that was behind them.

Fed on Costly Material.
The Windsor was a beautiful old hotel, fine and magnificent, with roomy corridors and a great central light and air well, around which a broad staircase rose clear to the roof.

This very luxury of room and prodigality of space made possible for the handsome hotel to become a furnace in less time than it would take to burn a common wood shanty.

The food on which the first tiny tongues of flame fed upon, thereafter developing one of the worst fires New York has ever seen, were curtains as flimsy as a spider's web and rugs of almost priceless value.

Before a man could rush to a fire box and ring an alarm the drawing room was swept by a whirlwind of fire.

It seems as if the fire must have been burning under the floor and in the walls, for on no other hypothesis can the rapidity of its spreading be accounted for.

At the first alarm the police, who had been keeping the way clear for the procession, formed in two platoons and swept the crowd back, parade and all.

There was no time for gentleness, no time for talk. As if they had been suddenly turned mad the police charged with their clubs, and this very barbarity saved no one knows how many lives.

Many of the people on the street did not know there was a fire; they only knew that the police were thundering at their heels and snatching them with their sticks.

Meanwhile the hotel was vomiting forth its population of a thousand and maybe two thousand people.

As in all big hotels, the employees are accustomed to some sort of a fire drill, and immediately the detachments of porters, clerks and waiters went scurrying through the long corridors, hammering on doors and arousing the inmates to a sense of their danger.

There was an attempt to fight the fire with the discipline of the hotel drill. Hose was run off its reels and the water hydrants were turned on, but the naked Ygorites in the Philippines with their bows and arrows against the galling guns and exploding shells of the American army and navy did not wage a more inadequate fight.

The fire was on the heels of the bearers of the warning. The few lengths of hose belonging to the hotel were licked up as if they had been tape.

The width of the corridors made it easy to run, and the guests filled them in their rush for the streets.

The elevators, although they were run until their shafts were aflame, brought comparatively few down to the ground floor.

The road out of the death trap was down the splendid marble stairs. And down these stairs, while the polished varnished stone already gave back the red reflection, poured a motley and terrified procession.

Most of the men outside of the employees were naturally out of the hotel or down on the ground floor, in the cafes and lounging rooms.

So that the majority of the terror-stricken throng were women; women of wealth and fashion and beauty, who had many of them not even taken the time to snatch their jewels and their dressing tables at the dreadful summons.

Up from below, breasting the down-pouring torrent of humanity, came the men—agonized husbands and fathers trying to save their wives and daughters.

After them came police heroes intent on rescue and firemen dragging their pompous nalia to fight the fire where it was fiercest.

There was every heroism and every horror. Men dashed down the stairs, and time again. Other men had their senses stricken from them and ran about like terror-stricken maniacs, to whom everybody was an obstacle that must be beaten down.

Never Such a Pandemonium.
Meanwhile through the tangled mob outside the fire engines had forced their way. It was pandemonium. The shouting of the crowds and the orders of the policemen, the clanging of the fire bells, the tramping of horses' hoofs, the shriller and sharper note of the ambulance gong—for they did not stop until there were mangled bodies in sight to call all the ambulances in the city to the work of mercy—made a din that told a dreadful story to people blocks away.

It was after the first wild rush that swept so many to safety down the broad staircase that the most awful events of the great fire occurred.

All of the women had not sprung from their rooms at the first alarm. Some had stopped to dress, and others had gathered their most precious belongings. And these were those who were doomed. Then, too, there were sick persons in the house, bed-ridden men and women, for a hotel the size of the Windsor is a city in itself, and at any hour of the day there are sick and well, sleeping and waking, all manner and conditions of people, covering every function of life.

When these belated ones got into the corridors at last a great swarm was gone. Here and there the firemen, and the stories of labyrinthine heroic firemen, lingered, intent on their work of salvation, regardless of their own peril.

There were long stretches of corridors, deserted except for frantic victims of their own tardiness or disability, and these corridors for the most part were bounded by billowing walls of fire.

Flames That Knew No Mercy.
Up the great central wall roared the fire. Right at the stairways, the loggia and accustomed avenues to the street, were the sentries of fire, curling and swelling with

threats to all who dared to pass that dread picket line.

Then these belated guests took to the fire escapes, throwing open windows and reaching their arms out to the sea of people who groaned blow, like the ocean among the cliffs.

It was these suddenly deathly apparitions at the windows, with the fire roaring behind them and the precipice before, that constituted the most awful features of the fire.

Most of those who came to the windows were saved at last—saved by dint of most wonderful exertion and daring on the part of the firemen and citizens, who dashed back into the burning building and fought their way to where women hung fainting on the window ledges.

The rescuers threaded the impossible paths among these ledges and architectural pinacles, hanging over ghastly depths, passing the helpless ones from window to window, planting ladders, and climbing on them where it seemed that nothing greater than a sparrow could find a foothold.

But the fire was too hot, the time was too short. While the firemen were helping some to safety, others felt the touch of the red hand upon them from behind, and threw themselves from the windows.

First Falling Form Was a Girl.
A girl appeared on the sixth floor, beyond the reach of ladder, rope or rescuer. She climbed upon the ledge and fell forward, striking and whirling, and over and over until she landed dead in the street.

A number of those who threw themselves in this way from the window fell upon people in the street, and instead of one mangled body, there were two.

And these things the crowd could only watch helplessly, sickening at the sight. They saw distorted faces appear at the windows, they saw women raise their arms out and scream, and then retreat or fall back into the fire.

By this time all the roofs of the neighborhood were assumed to be on fire. There were scores of them on the roof of the burning hotel itself, pouring their futile streams down skylights and through holes chopped in the roof, and became chimneys as soon as the axe cut through.

On one of the roofs, that of a residence in the rear of the hotel, the dead body of a girl was found. She had thrown herself from one of the high windows of the hotel when escape was cut off.

Numbers of people, men and women, saved themselves by sliding down the fire escapes, which were kept in the rooms. What might be described as the second stage of the horror was long drawn out; it seemed as though it would never end.

On all sides of the building people were hurling themselves to death or frightful maiming.

Houses of the Rich as Hospitals.
And every moment made it worse. The palaces of the neighborhood were turned into impromptu hospitals; the ambulances came and went, and still the death tally reached no close.

Long after it seemed impossible that any life could be left within the glowing shell, there were those awful faces appearing for an instant at a window and dropping back, to be seen no more.

The Gould mansion, which Miss Helen Gould occupies, is directly across Forty-seventh street from the burned hotel. It was several times on fire.

Miss Gould was not at home, but as soon as the awful character of the catastrophe became known the house was thrown open for the reception and care of the wounded.

It was evident long before the ambulance surgeons ceased sorting the wounded from the dead that the destruction of the hotel was absolute and complete.

The fire was spreading; the Gould mansion was on fire at the roof and windows, and the wounded who had temporary succor there had to be removed. The firemen were driven from the roof as they had been driven from the corridors, and it seemed certain that in the collapse of these corridors some of the bravest found the fate they so often dared.

Nearly every fire engine in the lower part of the city was at the fire, pouring in streams from every place where a point of vantage offered.

Water Like Streams of Naphtha.
They might as well have been streams of naphtha, for all the effect they had for an hour or more.

Up the steps of the magnificent private palaces neighboring the firemen dragged their wet horses, and through the top windows of these they poured their streams across the way and into the windows of the upper story.

Presently the centre of the roof caved in. From every window of the great structure a volley of flame belched forth. The crashing of the roof and the roar of the fire forced the tongues of fire to leap clear across the street, scorching the men on the housetops, snatching the windows and searing the house fronts.

In another instant a ball of smoke as big as a city blazed up from the great central vent, and the flames roared after it. Then it was that the fire assumed its most terrible aspect. There was no wind, and the flames were at their point. The fire seemed to follow the walls and bear inward to the angle, making four frightful incursions.

So great was the updraft that boards and beams and sheets of wood were drawn up and the faces of flame as if they were in truth solid.

Pyrotechnics Amid the Horror.
These fragments, blazing fiercely, were belched up to the top of the volcano and held there for a second or more like banners on a tower top. They only dropped back to make place for other blazing fragments, and the air for blocks around was full of sparks and wisps of fire. For hours the top of the fiery temple was visible.

People packed the streets and roofs for blocks in every direction. The walls began to fall the police reserves had pushed the crowds back out of danger. The throngs were thinner, and a great spectacle as the fire.

The plan of the Windsor was simple. The front on Fifth avenue was a block with cornices of brownstone, and the walls of tiles. Upon the corners were stunted towers, with a large central tower above the entrance.

For an hour or more this wall stood against its background of flame, but shortly before 4 o'clock the great central tower began to lean and a tremor went all through the front wall, slowly at first, but with increasing rapidity this tower toppled. It was followed within ten minutes by the collapse of the entire front wall. This went with a roar like a hundred hurricanes.

One of the signs—\$50,000 Art Collection—Came's Infamous 1171 B way, near 25th st.

How the Firemen Were Caught When the Tower Tumbled in Ruins.

Where the heroes of Engine Company No. 30, McDonald, Kenney and King, were injured.

about the fire, is resting well at Roosevelt Hospital. She and her husband, who is a type founder, made their home at the Windsor.

SLID TO THE GROUND ON ROPE FIRE ESCAPE.
Mrs. Alice Price Saved by the Courage of Dr. Neil McPhatter, of Edinburgh.

Mrs. Alice Price, a widow, the sister of Governor Allen D. Candler, of Georgia, was saved by the heroism of Dr. Neil McPhatter, of Edinburgh.

Mrs. Price was in her rooms on the fifth floor with Mrs. Morris H. Henry and Dr. McPhatter. Mrs. Henry detected the odor of something burning, and Mrs. Price opened the door. The hallway was filled with smoke, which rushed in a volume into the room.

The thick smoke overcame Mrs. Price, and she sank to the floor. Dr. McPhatter raised her, and urged the two women to be calm, secured one of the rope fire escapes with which every room in the hotel was provided and fastened it about Mrs. Price.

The woman was beside herself with fear and would not drop from the window. Dr. McPhatter pleaded with her. At last she said: "Doctor, I'll risk it. Good-by." And she swung from the window.

She nearly lost consciousness in the descent. To the surgeon who attended her at Bellevue Hospital she said that she seemed to be for hours in mid-air. She remembered dimly that she struck time and again against the burning building. When at last she reached the ground she did not know where she was and remembered nothing more until she recovered consciousness in the ambulance.

She was injured internally, and complained of partial paralysis of the left side. She is bruised about the head and body and her hands are badly lacerated.

Mrs. Price wore jewels of great value, and these were all with her when she reached the hospital. In addition to her jewelry Mrs. Price had in a purse in a private dwelling by George T. Easton, the present proprietor. The lower part of the building is used for the men's bath, and the upper floor for women. Sleeping apartments are on the second and third floors.

The women were not at all alarmed when at first the hotel was caught fire, and the room a falling wall ran

tioned on the roof. The women did not wait then to put on their clothing, but fled panic-stricken down stairs and sought refuge in the first room they found open. This room belonged to E. J. Nellis, and he was there. He fled, leaving the terror-stricken women in possession.

The upper floor was in flames by this time, and it was impossible to recover the clothing of the bathers. Enough wearing apparel was secured to supply them, and they put it on and hurried away.

AMMONIA AND OIL KEPT IN BIG TANKS.
They Caused the Two Explosions Which Helped to Wreck the Doomed Building.

On the authority of the chief engineer of the building, it is stated that there was a ten-ton ammonia refrigerator in the cellar of the building and also a tank containing 100 gallons of engine oil. This explains the two explosions which blew out the entrance of the building early in the fire. The first of these explosions was of such violence that it hurled men standing across the street half way up the stoops of houses and almost knocked down the teams of the fire engines and trucks in the line of its force.

The noise of this explosion was heard for blocks and gave rise to the rumor that the entire hotel had fallen in, burying all who had not been rescued. A cloud of dirt and dust that literally resounded the walls of the buildings opposite was blown from the hotel by this explosion.

The second report followed in about two minutes. It was not so severe as the first, but it sufficed to blow firemen off their feet and hurl them half way across the thoroughfare. Undoubtedly these explosions resulted from the ammonia and the oil. There is nothing to show that the boilers exploded, for the boilers accom-

panying the spectacle were not those usual to boiler explosions.

RUMOR OF A GREAT ROBBERY UNFOUNDED.
A rumor became current in the crowds about the ruins last night that a great robbery had been committed in the neighborhood. This rumor was traced and was found to have originated in a visit Inspector Kane paid to the Gould home.

When the Forty-seventh street wall of the Windsor fell, one of the windows on that side of the Gould house was broken. The house was full of strangers during the fire also, and at the request of George Gould three policemen and a detective were put in the house to stand guard.

Mr. Gould learned late in the evening that the policemen and the detectives would be withdrawn at midnight. He sent for the Inspector to ask that another detail be put on when the day men should be excused. Inspector Kane granted his request.

ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL BESIAGED BY FRIENDS.
The four women taken from the Hotel Windsor to Roosevelt Hospital are being cared for each in private rooms. Dr. Charles McBurney was summoned at once, and he is taking personal charge of these patients. Three trained nurses are assigned to each room.

Mrs. Bailey's husband telephoned from Chicago to the hospital about 6 p. m. He gave instructions to spare no expense for his wife's comfort, and to tell her that he would take the first train to this city. Mrs. Helen Bailey reached the hospital during the evening.

Mr. Waldo was out when the telephone message telling that his wife was injured reached his office. A messenger was sent

after him, but he could not be found until almost 5 p. m. He hurried to the hospital in a cab. His daughter was there before him, and was seated at her mother's bedside.

Two elderly women, relatives of Mrs. Henry, came all the way from Washington. They had been telegraphed for and reached the hospital about 8:30 p. m. That hour Mrs. Henry was still conscious. Her friends were allowed to see her.

Donald McKay, of Englewood, N. J., saved his mother and sister from a room on the second floor, from which they were observing the parade. He returned to the hotel to get some effects from his room and has not been seen since.

Three women were rescued by Policeman Luke Hiler, of the Mercer street station.

A negro boy employed in the hotel was told by the clerk to close the fire when the fire reached the office. He had difficulty in shutting the doors, and this coupled with the excitement of the occasion, drove him crazy. When the firemen arrived he was found hitting his head against the walls. He was sent to a house in the neighborhood for treatment and eventually recovered from his frenzy.

Policeman Hauptmann, of the Elizabeth street station, went to the fourth floor on an errand of rescue, fell down the stairs in the smoke and was badly cut about the head. He was sent home.

When the fire broke out a La Mott Morgan, of Alabama, who was on the balcony watching the parade, hurried to the fourth floor and guided to safety Mrs. Agneson Jarvis and her daughter.